

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2543

As of February 24, 2020

Title: An act relating to ensuring eligible veterans and their dependents qualify for in-state residency.

Brief Description: Ensuring eligible veterans and their dependents qualify for in-state residency.

Sponsors: House Committee on College & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Paul, Dufault, Kilduff, Leavitt, Peterson, Graham, Smith, Davis, Volz and Ormsby).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/20, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/20/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides in-state residency to students on certain leave from active duty from the uniformed services who have veteran education benefits.
- Provides in-state residency to the spouse or child of an individual, who has separated with at least ten years of service honorably, if they enroll within three years of the service member's date of separation.
- Expands in-state residency to students who are eligible for, rather than entitled to, transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Kellee Gunn (786-7429)

Background: A financially independent student wishing to establish residency for higher education purposes must have established a Washington domicile for one year before the first day of registration for a purpose other than educational. In some instances, residency is granted to certain students without necessarily meeting the domicile requirements, such as active duty military or National Guard members and their spouses and dependents. These exceptions include students who:

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- have separated from the uniformed services with any period of honorable service after at least 90 days of active duty service, are eligible for veteran education benefits, and enter a higher education institution in Washington within three years of their date of separation from the uniformed services;
- are entitled to veteran education benefits based on their relationship as a spouse, former spouse, or dependent to an individual who has separated from the uniformed services with any period of honorable service after at least 90 days of active duty service, and enter a higher education institution in Washington within three years of the service member's date of separation from the uniformed services; and
- are entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferable to them by a spouse, former spouse, or child who is on active duty in the uniformed services.

Summary of Bill: Eligibility for in-state residency is expanded to the following categories of individuals:

- students on terminal, separation, or transition leave pending separation, or release from active duty, from the uniformed services with any period of honorable service after at least 90 days of active duty service and are eligible for veteran education benefits;
- students who are the spouse or child of an individual who has separated from the uniformed services with at least ten years of honorable service and at least 90 days of active duty service, and who enter an institution of higher education in Washington within three years of the service member's date of separation; and
- students who are eligible for, not just entitled to, Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits based on the student's relationship as a spouse, former spouse, or child to an individual who is on active duty in the uniformed services.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Our state has made a major commitment for veterans to qualify for in-state tuition. People do not change residency while they are in the service. The retirement process from the military can take months. This bill allows those individuals who are retiring to get in-state tuition during the processing of their retirement paperwork. This is a cleanup bill to close a loop to allow for these students to get eligibility for residency. This will also help the institutions' residency officers.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Dave Paul, Prime Sponsor; Matthew Sutherland, Professional Student Association of WSU; Scott Copeland, SBCTC.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.